



# Senator Michael HEAVEY

Thirty-fourth Legislative District



Spring, 1998

Dear Friend,

Many have called the recently completed 1998 legislative session, "the session that didn't need to happen." While the Legislature grappled with a number of issues, there was very little to show for the 60 days of work. A complicated transportation revenue package was approved to be placed on the November ballot, a ban on gay marriages — already illegal — was approved, and very little was done to improve our education system or to address serious environmental problems and health care needs.

On the positive side, we were able to adopt more stringent regulations and penalties for those who drive while intoxicated and to provide additional support for developmentally disabled citizens and their families. Closer to home, we were able to obtain funding to increase ferry service for Vashon Island residents and defeat legislation which would have driven up the cost of heating fuel and other oil-based products for those who live on the Island.

If you have any questions or comments about the recently completed session, please feel free to contact me. I appreciate hearing your thoughts, ideas, and questions.

Sincerely,

Michael Heavey

## VASHON FERRY SERVICE

Using the idea of Vashon Islanders Willem Maas and Chet Whitman, we were able to obtain \$1.4 million in the supplemental transportation budget for additional ferry service for Vashon. The funds will be used to run the ferry Hiyu between Vashon and Southworth. This will allow the three ferries currently in service to run solely between Fauntleroy and Vashon and Fauntleroy and Southworth. The more efficient system will provide better service and save a great deal of time and hassle for Vashon ferry riders.

In addition, Gov. Locke recently signed into law legislation which will authorize the construction of four new passenger-only ferries. One of the four ferries will serve Southworth, lessening the impact on the Fauntleroy community.

## SPOKANE STREET VIADUCT

I have been working very hard over the past several years to make the Spokane Street Viaduct a safer place to drive. While some positive changes have been made, additional work must be done as soon as possible to prevent the deadly head-on collisions which have taken too many lives.

This session, I was able to get \$750,000 included in the Senate supplemental transportation budget for a temporary median barrier on the Spokane Street Viaduct. These funds would have been used in conjunction with funds from the City of Seattle, King County, and the Port of Seattle to install the barrier. Unfortunately, the funds for this project were stripped out of the budget in the House of Representatives.

I will continue to work with the City of Seattle on the construction of a permanent solution for the Spokane Street Viaduct and hope that we can get this needed improvement done before another accident claims a life or causes a serious injury.

### How to Contact Sen. Heavey

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### THIRD RUNWAY IS NOT A DONE DEAL!

There are those who suggest that third runway opponents give up the fight against the third runway at Sea-Tac airport — the band-aid approach to air traffic congestion and the most expensive runway ever. But this project is not a done deal!

The federal government has agreed to finance only a small percentage of the projected construction costs. Airlines and passengers are expected to bear the brunt of the costs, but with the Asian economic crisis and a recent decline in air travel, even these revenues could fall far below projections. With the construction estimates making the proposed runway the most expensive ever constructed, who's left to pay the tab — taxpayers?

In addition, what about the enormous dirt problem? Twenty-six million cubic yards — enough to fill nine Kingdoms — will be needed for the proposed project. Where will this dirt come from? And hauling the dirt to the site will require massive double-trailer dump trucks moving up and down our highways six days a week, 14 hours a day, for six years.

There also are significant environmental concerns yet to be addressed by the Port of Seattle. The area chosen for the third runway is an 11-acre wetlands and a creek hosting a threatened run of chinook salmon, scheduled for protection under the federal Endangered Species Act. Filling a wetland and altering a salmon-bearing creek at a time when we are spending millions of dollars to bring back our salmon makes no sense. Impacts of noise and air pollution on neighborhoods and schools from the second runway also have not yet been adequately addressed. How can we even begin to deal with the impacts from a third runway?

### SEATTLE DISTRICT ELECTIONS

As you may be aware, I sponsored legislation during the 1998 session which would have required the City of Seattle to elect six of its council members by district and three at-large. An overwhelming majority of the Senate (37-12) joined me in supporting this legislation. Unfortunately, time ran out on us in the House of Representatives and the bill did not make it to the governor's desk.

My bill would have given our neighborhoods the chance to have a strong voice on the City Council, an opportunity to have true representation. Every major government in the state and the nation is elected by district. This is not a new idea. In fact, this bill is rooted in the same democratic principles that helped found the United States more than 200 years ago: the fundamental belief in having someone from your area represent you in the larger government. There's a bond, an allegiance that develops between a council member and his or her district — and that's good.

As a state senator, I represent the 34th Legislative District (West Seattle, Burien, Vashon Island). While I work on issues of statewide significance, such as public education, growth management, and environmental protection, I also directly represent my district on issues of local concern. If I don't stand

up and fight for my district on critical issues such as a new Spokane Street Viaduct, Sea-Tac airport, or additional ferry service for Vashon Island, who will? With all City Council members currently elected at-large, citizens don't know who to contact about potholes, drainage problems, or garbage pickups. Local representation gives power back to the people and forces more accountability.

### DRUNK DRIVING LEGISLATION

A number of bills, 13 to be exact, were approved this session to crack down on drunk driving. Among other things, these measures lower the blood-alcohol level for drunk driving to .08, suspend drivers' licenses of first-time offenders for 90 days, and allow for ignition locking devices for the most extreme cases. They also keep permanent records of offenders' convictions and permanently revoke licenses of three-time convicted drivers.

While I supported the increased regulations and penalties, I continue to believe that we need to step up as a society and develop no-tolerance policies like those in effect in Scandinavia. Until we do, I believe the bills we have approved will have little effect in preventing deaths, injuries, and property damage caused by drunk drivers.

### SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS FOR LICENSES?

Beginning June 23 of this year, any application for a driver's license, fishing license, professional license, or any other license issued by the state will require the applicant to disclose his or her Social Security number. Unless the federal government grants a waiver from the collection of Social Security numbers, this law will go into effect.

I strongly opposed legislation requiring this disclosure and spoke against it on the Senate floor. While the federal government has threatened to withhold federal funds from states that do not collect Social Security numbers, I believe this is an invasion of our personal privacy and that the legislation violates our constitutional privacy protections. I also do not believe we should allow the federal government to coerce us into adopting this legislation with the threat of losing federal dollars. We should stand on principle and force the federal government to change the guidelines which require this invasion of personal privacy.

Please send me your thoughts about this issue.

### GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY

Gov. Locke signed legislation this year which will eliminate 236 reports that state agencies submit to the Legislature. Many of the reports that were eliminated were required to be submitted annually and were an unneeded burden on agencies. Eliminating these reports will save time and taxpayer dollars.

More work is needed to make government more efficient and user-friendly. I will continue to look for ways, and support efforts, to make our state government as effective and efficient as possible. If you have ideas on how to improve our state government, please let me know.

*On the back page, there is a panel for you to fill out and send back to me with your thoughts on these issues. Please take the time to let me know how you feel about the issues discussed in this newsletter or any other legislative matters that you have questions or concerns about. Thank you.*

### SALMON PROTECTION

A recent federal proposal to list Puget Sound chinook and other state salmon runs under the Endangered Species Act threatens more than local control of our own state resources. It is a serious sign that our quality of life, our public health, and a cultural icon of our region are in big trouble.

This year the Legislature passed a bill to set up the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office to evaluate and prioritize salmon recovery plans. The bill also creates a science panel to review the salmon recovery projects coordinated by the state. The results would be compiled in an annual study conducted by the Salmon Recovery Office. In addition, the 1998 supplemental budget contained an additional \$36 million for salmon restoration projects and watershed planning.

While this is a good start in addressing a very serious issue, much more work needs to be done in order to restore our salmon runs. Reduced salmon runs are an indication of the destruction being done to their habitat. If we are not able to protect the salmon's habitat, we will find ourselves in the same position we experienced with the spotted owl.



*Photo courtesy of Dick Milligan*

## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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**HEAVY**  
Senator Michael

**BULK RATE**  
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